



NATIONAL SPORTING LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

A Research Center for Turf and Field Sports, their History and Social Significance

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Judith Ozment, Librarian

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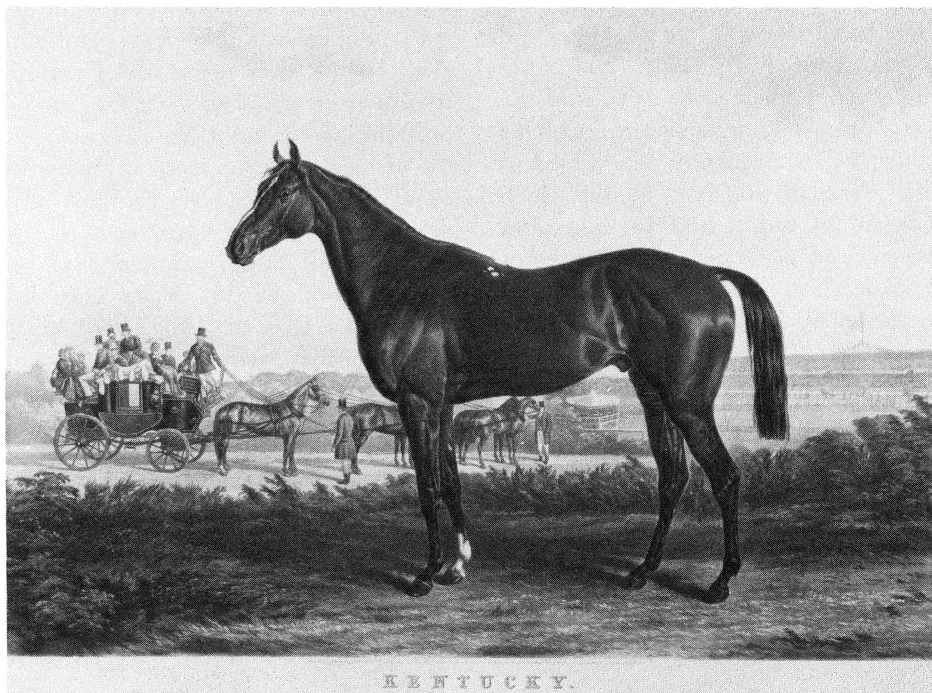
The Library's Holdings of Prints After Equestrian Portraits by Edward Troye

By Alexander Mackay-Smith

William Trotter Porter (1809-1858), born in Vermont and educated at Dartmouth College, came to New York in 1831 with little experience as an editor and publisher and with almost no background with sport. Nevertheless, with an optimism seldom paralleled in the history of journalism, he established on December 10, 1831 the weekly *Spirit of the Times and Life in New York*, modeled on the British weekly, *Bell's Life in London*. The subtitle of the magazine read, *A Chronicle of the Turf, Agriculture, Field Sports, Literature, and the Stage*. It had as its competitor *The American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine*, founded in 1829 by John Stuart Skinner, a highly successful monthly journal. This competition, together with Porter's inexperience and lack of capital brought disaster. Porter lost control of the magazine, but by January 3, 1835 he had repurchased it and remained as editor until 1856. By 1838 the magazine had achieved a circulation of 40,000, mostly in the South.

Encouraged by prosperity, Porter purchased the *Turf Register* beginning with the issue of Jan-Feb 1839, thus achieving a monopoly in the field of sporting periodicals.

Financially speaking all was not well. The financial panic of 1837 was spreading to the agricultural south, even though the style of living of the plantation owners remained unchanged. If he could induce old subscribers to subscribe to the *Spirit* as well as to the *Turf Register*, his financial problems would be eased. As an added inducement he decided to publish the first group of large sporting engravings suitable for framing to be issued in the United States. These were



The NSL's splendid print of KENTUCKY with his owner, Leonard Jerome, driving a coach and six in the background. To the right are the grandstands, the infield and bandstand of Jerome Park.

printed on excellent paper, separate from the pages of the *Spirit of the Times* and accompanying the regular edition. From March 9, 1839 to June 29, 1844 fourteen of these engravings were published. Eleven of these were portraits of Thoroughbred racehorses, ten after portraits by Edward Troye, and one (Boston) after a portrait by Henri DeLattre. Eight of these, in the possession of The National Sporting Library, are hung as a group in the reading room of the library.

Porter used the advertising columns of the *Turf Register* to induce its readers to also patronize the *Spirit*. In the July 1839 issue, he wrote, "The series will form an American Sporting Gallery worth of itself more than the price of

subscription to the *Spirit of the Times*. Not one of the series will cost us as little as Five Hundred Dollars, while three of them will cost nearly double that sum."

Again in the December 1839 issue he said, "the Engravings correspond in size (eighteen inches by thirteen) with those annually published in London of the *Winners of the Derby*, *The Oaks*, and *St. Leger*, and have been executed in line on steel plate, expressly for this paper, from Original Pictures in oil by the most eminent Artists."

The first of the library's prints is also the first of the series published March 9, 1939 (page 27). It is the portrait of Black Maria held by her groom Bill Patrick. She was a coal black mare foaled in 1826

by American Eclipse out of Lady Lightfoot by Sir Archie. A very durable mare who raced for seven seasons, she was famous for having won the noted 20 mile race at the Union Course, Long Island, Oct. 13, 1832—it took her five heats of four miles each to win. The portrait was painted by Edward Troye in May 1834 for Commodore John Cox Stevens of 'Castle Point,' Hoboken, N.J., at his stud farm on Jamaica Bay, Long Island.

Each of the engravings was accompanied by a memoir "detailing the life and achievements of the horse," written by William T. Porter. Of Black Maria he said, "Troye was unusually successful with his picture—as the old Black Maria entertained some vulgar prejudice against "sitting for her portrait." Troye directed Bill Patrick, her faithful groom, to ride her out into a paddock in front of his window. This proceeding might be all very well for the painter and for the mare, Bill thought, but as for him, he was inclined to sulk, after the hours' promenading, so, whipping off his saddle, he incontinently determined to hitch the mare and bolt, for the which disregard of orders and his lukewarm assistance in facilitating the progress of the Fine Arts, Troye clapped him into his picture in the very act of committing so grave an offense in the eye of a turfman or an artist, affixing a race horse to a tree! Of course he will go down through all time as the boy who was guilty of so unpardonable a sin, but for fear his punishment would be greater than he could bear, Troye, through urgent intercession, was finally induced to remit a portion of the punishment he had intended, by concealing his face."

KENTUCKY

Bred by John M. Clay at his 'Ashland' Stud, Lexington, Ky., Kentucky was a bay horse by Lexington out of a daughter of Im. Glencoe (Magnolia). This combination of bloodlines put Lexington at the head of the sire list, year after year. Out of 22 races Kentucky won 20 starts. In the autumn of 1866 he was being pointed for the Inauguration Stakes Sept. 5 at Jerome Park, (situated just north of New York City), the racing complex built and owned by Leonard Jerome, grandfather of Winston Churchill. At that time he was owned by a syndicate consisting of John Hunter, William R. Travers and George Osgood, who had commissioned Troye to come

from Kentucky to paint three portraits for the syndicate members. As expected, Kentucky won the Inaugural Stakes, 4 mile heats, in straight heats, racing in the colors of John Hunter. Immediately after the race he was purchased by Leonard Jerome who owned the horse on Oct. 3, when, again in John Hunter's name, he won the Grand National Handicap at 2½ miles carrying 144 pounds.

With the change of ownership Troye saw his three commissions about to vanish. Mr. Jerome promptly cured the situation however. He went the syndicate one better and commissioned Troye to paint not three but four portraits. One for himself and one for each of the three syndicate members for which he footed the bill! In November Sanders D. Bruce, editor of *Turf, Field and Farm*, went to Troye's studio to observe the artist's progress with the four paintings. After coming back to his desk he wrote the following description of the Jerome portrait. It reads in the Nov. 24 issue, "In the first painting Kentucky is represented with head erect, eyes flashing, and flesh quivering with excitement. He is drawn fine for a race, and those who saw the horse on the day of the great Inauguration Race at Jerome Park when such game spirits as Onward, Fleetwing, and Idlewild were so easily vanquished, will readily recognize this picture and pronounce it the most lifelike likeness of all. The neck is proudly arched and the spirit flashes from the eyes as proudly as it flashed on the 25th of September in

the presence of admiring thousands. This painting is for Mr. Jerome, the owner of the horse, and if it ever fades from the canvas, it will be for the reason that so much of the real spirit of the immortal racer is embodied in it, that it will grow tired of its fetters, burst the trammels, and, with an eagle bound, join with the planets in a grand and never ending race around the sun."

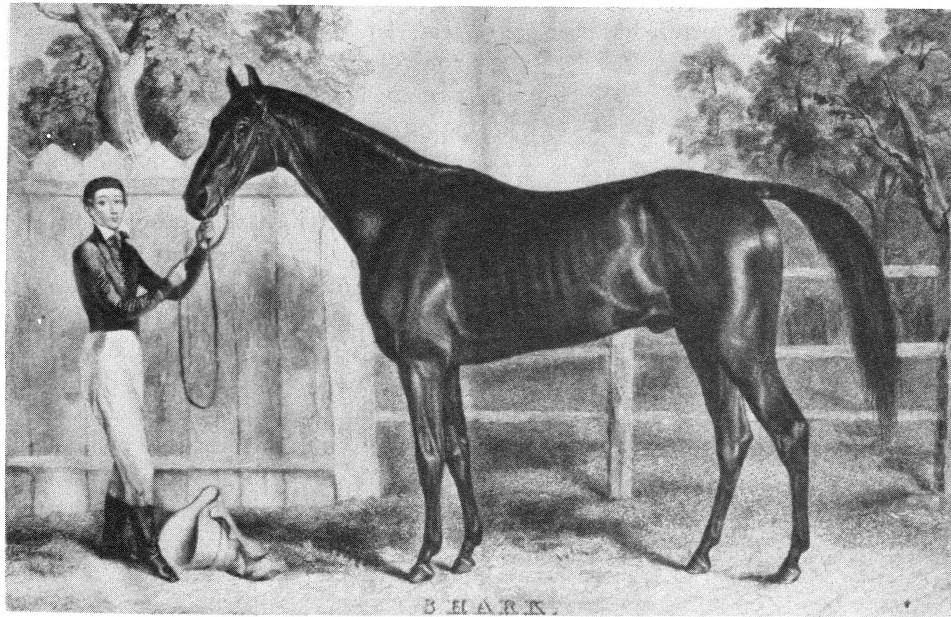
To the left of the horse is a coach and six horses attended by two footmen in uniforms and top hats. On the box of the coach is Mr. Jerome holding the reins. Behind him on top of the coach is the coachman, three members of the syndicate and the wives of all four gentlemen. In the right foreground are the stands of the course and the infield of Jerome Park with the bandstand in the middle. The Duke of Marlborough made his often quoted statement complaining about the six horses in the picture which he considered ostentatious—"a gentleman drives only a coach of four."

Jerome sent the painting to London so that a colored lithograph could be made from it. The task of engraving the portrait of Kentucky was entrusted to Goupil and Company, the famous French firm which had a branch in London. It was actually published in New York in 1867 by "M. Knoedler, Broadway," a firm which still flourishes in New York today. Of all the contemporary prints after portraits by Edward Troye, this is the most famous and the most splendid.



ARGYLE, engraved by Robert Hinshelwood after two portraits painted by Edward Troye in 1836 and Henri DeLattre in 1839. Owned jointly by Col. Hampton II and Col. Johnson, their two properties are shown in the background, Col. Hampton's residence 'Millwood' in South Carolina and Col. Johnson's newly built stable at 'Oakland,' Virginia.

There are a number of the prints in existence. A fine example is owned by the NSL which obtained it from the estate of the late Harry T. Peters, Jr., but unfortunately the whereabouts of the original painting is unknown. It could well have remained in England.



SHARK, shown in racing condition following his most famous win at the Union Course, 1834, after beating his sister Black Maria at four mile heats. He is held by his jockey, George Nelson.

ARGYLE

Contained in the issue of May 23, 1840 (page 139) was an engraving of a portrait of Argyle, a brown colt foaled 1831 by Monsieur Tonson out of Thistle Ogle's Oscar. The engraving by Robert Hinshelwood was based on two portraits of the horse. The first was a portrait by Troye painted early in 1836 at 'Millwood,' the residence of Col. Wade Hampton II near Columbia, S.C. The second was a portrait by Henri DeLattre painted in 1839 at 'Oakland,' the residence of Col. William Ransom Johnson, near Petersburg, Va. In 1839 Argyle was owned jointly by Col. Hampton and Col. Johnson. In the background appears the 'Millwood' mansion built in 1817 by Col. Hampton's father, and in the right background is the newly constructed training stable built by Col. Hampton. Porter commented, "Mr. Hinshelwood has been very happy in transferring to his engraving the strong features presented by the two portraits from which it was made first as it presents a view of a favorite country residence of a distinguished ornament of the turf (Col. Hampton of South Carolina), and his training stable; and second, it is very superior as a work of art. Our artist has vastly improved even Troye's picture, though the engraving conveys little idea

of the very beautiful and picturesque situation of the grounds about this elegant residence. Hinshelwood, however, never has enjoyed the good fortune of seeing the magnificent old oaks which almost embower it, though from our dell

scription he has drawn one in the foreground, as well as a group of sunny Carolina belles returning from a morning gallop."

SHARK

In the issue of Feb. 15, 1840 (page 595) Porter included an engraving of the black stallion Shark held by his jockey George Nelson. A full brother to Black Maria, foaled 1830, Shark's most famous exploit was to defeat his sister at the Union Course on May 9, 1834. Immediately thereafter he was purchased for \$8,000 by Commodore Robert F. Stockton of 'Morven,' Princeton, N.J., who promptly commissioned Troye to paint the horse's portrait at the Union Course.

William T. Porter wrote—"The painting from which Shark's portrait was engraved was executed in the spring of 1834 immediately after his race at four mile heats on the Union Course (May 9th) in which he beat the Black Maria. It was considered a very striking likeness at the time, as was that of George Nelson, his clever jockey, who was represented as holding him 'when sitting for his picture,' but being taken when the horse was in training, after a severe race of twelve miles, (three 4-mile heats) it gives him by comparison, a coarser head and lighter body than justly belonged to him. Since he has been withdrawn from the

Turf, his frame has become enlarged and he has filled out to such a degree that his head seems smaller and better shaped than the majority of the get of Eclipse."

On Oct. 23, 1834, for sums variously reported as \$15,000 and \$17,500, Shark was sold to John Charles Craig, of Philadelphia, Troye's first patron.

BOSTON

The March 1840 (page 6) issue featured an engraving after a portrait by Henri DeLattre of Boston, the greatest racehorse of the 19th century. Boston was a chestnut horse foaled in 1833 by Timoleon out of a mare by Ball's Florizel. In addition to his unequaled record on the racecourse he was a leading sire. Among his offspring was the immortal stallion and racehorse Lexington. During most of his racing career he was owned by James Long of Washington, a notorious bettor. He was trained under the supervision of Col. William Ransom Johnson, "The Napoleon of the Turf," of 'Oakland,' Chesterfield County, Virginia. The portrait was painted in the summer of 1839 based on a charcoal drawing of Boston by Edward Troye, who in the spring of 1839 was at Oakland painting a portrait of Johnson's Fanny. Because Troye had to travel from Oakland to Georgetown, Ky. for his marriage on July 16, he didn't then have time to paint a portrait in oil based on his own drawing—in later life he painted several such portraits. Porter was in a hurry to get in print a portrait of Boston, then at the height of his fame. He decided to have the DeLattre portrait engraved, even though he had some reservations about it.

His comments were as follows: "The beautiful portrait of Boston which accompanies this Memoir is from the burin of Mr. Dick, one of the most eminent artists in the United States. It is a faithful copy of the original picture, which was painted at the close of last spring's campaign (June-July 1839) by Mr. DeLattre expressly for Mr. William R. Johnson, of near Petersburg, Va. DeLattre's portrait is considered a very faithful likeness, and the engraving, we are confident, will be recognized at a glance by everyone acquainted with the characteristics of 'Old White-nose'—Boston's portrait in the artist's hands we could have intimated to him that he had not given sufficient inclination to his pasterns, they are very short, but from his great weight, very oblique. In other respects the portrait is nearly perfect."

JOHN BASCOMBE

An engraving of a portrait of John Bascombe accompanied the issue of June 27, 1839 (page 211). Painted by Troye for Col. John Crowell at his residence, Mitchell, Al., John Bascombe was a chestnut colt foaled in 1831 by Bertrand out of Grey Goose by Pacolet. On April 12, 1836 at the Lafayette Course, Augusta, Ga. John Bascombe beat Argyle. In the ensuing weeks he walked from Augusta to Long Island where on May 31 at the Union Course, representing the South, he beat the Northern champion Post Boy in two straight heats of 4 miles each.

An engraving after this portrait had previously been published in the May 1837 issue of the *American Turf Register*. Its editor Gideon B. Smith wrote, "... a very superior painting by E. Troye—one of our very best judges of horses declared on examining the painting from which the present engraving was taken, that it was the very best representation of the racehorse he had ever seen. It should be borne in mind that the painting of Bascombe was taken when in *training condition*, immediately, we believe, after his great match race with Argyle on April 12, 1836."

IMPORTED LEVIATHAN

Accompanying the issue of Sept. 14, 1839 (page 331) was an engraving after a portrait by Troye of Imported Leviathan, a chestnut horse foaled 1823 by Muley out of a mare by Windle. In England from 1825 to 1827 he started 29 times and won 16 races. In 1830 he was purchased by Messrs. Weatherby for James Jackson of 'Forks of Cypress,' Florence, Al., Imported Leviathan was a big, heavily muscled animal who was considered rather too coarse by American bloodstock breeders when he first reached Tennessee. Their criticism was soon stifled. Based on the winnings of his get, he was leading sire from 1837-1839, 1843 and 1848. From 1840 to 1849 he was five times second on the list. In 1838 his get won 92 races and \$103,437, a record which stood for 32 years till surpassed by the get of Lexington in 1870. Jackson arranged to have his horse stand at 'Wall Spring,' the residence of Col. George Elliott, Gallatin, Tn., where Troye painted the portrait in June 1838.

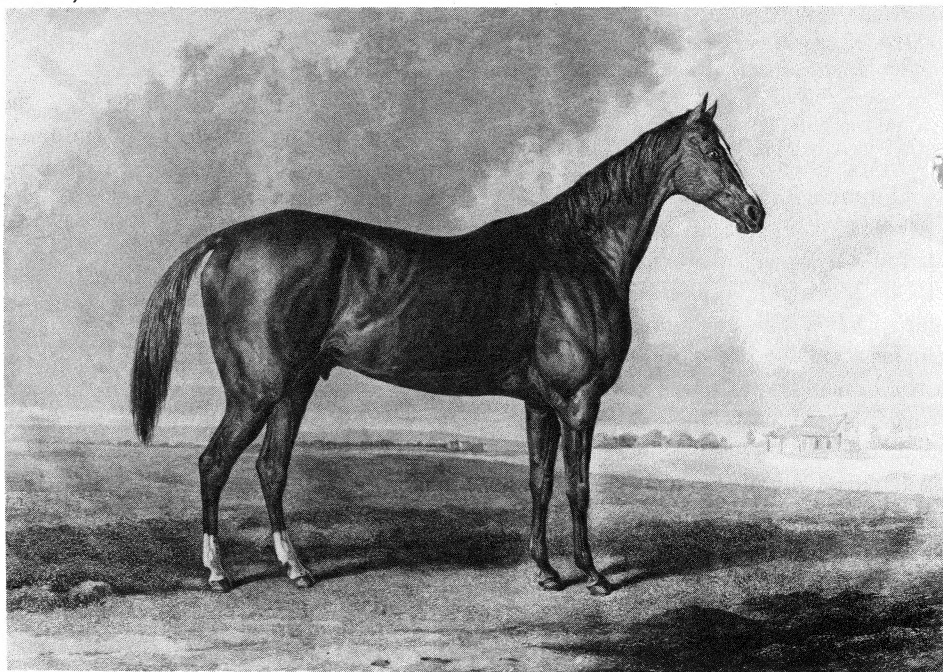
Porter commented: "Troye, the celebrated animal painter, has executed several pictures of him (5), but the one

from which our Portrait is engraved is considered among his happiest efforts. It was painted expressly for James Jackson, Esq., of 'Forks of Cypress,' near Florence, Al. who imported him, and we think it will be conceded on all hands that Mr. Dick, the artist (engraver), has preserved in his engraving all that spirit and effect of which the original picture has been so much admired."

WAGNER

Accompanying the issue of July 4, 1840 (page 201) was an engraving of a portrait by Troye of Wagner, a chestnut horse foaled 1834 by Sir Charles out of Maria West by Imp. Citizen. The horse is shown held by his jockey Cato. Wagner raced most successfully in New Orleans in 1838 and early 1839. On Sept. 10 and Oct. 6 at the Oakland Course, Louisville, Ky., as a representative of the East, he defeated Grey Eagle, the representative of the West in straight heats. He proceeded to the Buckeye Course, Cincinnati, where he walked over for the

the appearance of the horse when stripped to gallop over for the Jockey Club purse there. Cato (called Cate-O) stands out in pretty bold relief in the picture, as he does in the racing world, attired in his complete suit of scarlet and gold. As a jockey, Cate-O has very few equals on this side of the Atlantic; he has a capital seat, is very strong in his arms and thighs, and like Billy Black 'never gives nothing up'; his coolness and presence of mind under the most trying circumstances have acquired for him a reputation as a jockey second only to Gil Patrick. He has a handsome figure, which is set off to great advantage by a very beautiful and costly dress—the gift of James V. Wagner, Esq. of Baltimore, who in return for the compliment of having the horse named for him, presented jockey with a magnificent suit of clothes, seen in the picture. The hood of the horse's dress bears his initials, and the sheet his name, while the waggery of the saddler displayed itself in the word 'Duke' sewed into the roller—an appella-



BOSTON, a chestnut foaled in 1833, North America's greatest racehorse of the 19th century, later became a leading sire whose offspring included the immortal stallion and racehorse, Lexington.

Jockey Club purse. Troye's painting is dated Nov. 13, 1839. Porter's comments on the painting are as follows:

"The portrait of Wagner, which we present to our subscribers today, is considered a very faithful and striking likeness. It exhibits him in the superb condition with which Mr. Garrison almost always brought him to the post, though rather low in flesh, consequent upon a campaign of unusual length and severity. The background of the picture presents a fine view of the Stands, etc., of the Buckeye Course, and the artist had in his eye

tion by which Mr. W. is known to his familiar acquaintances. Cato's entire dress, boots, cap and all, also a bright scarlet, with gold tassles, epaulettes, and lace; everything about him is a 'neat fit' so that when mounted he looks 'rather varmint.'

It has been frequently remarked that his original portrait of Wagner is one of Troye's happiest efforts. He certainly took infinite pains with it, and the picture has afforded so much satisfaction that several orders have been given him for copies."

IMPORTED MONARCH

In 1835 Col. Wade Hampton II of Millwood, near Columbia, S.C. purchased in England, for 250 guineas, the yearling colt Monarch by Priam out of Delphine by Whisker which he imported in the autumn of 1836. Racing only at 3 and 4 years old, Monarch was unbeaten. Col. Hampton was immensely proud of the horse. He and Porter were most anxious to publish an engraving of his portrait in the *Spirit of the Times*. In 1838 Hampton commissioned DeLattre to try his hand, but the portrait was not a success, particularly as regard to the anatomy of the horse. In 1839 a local artist, James DeVeaux, tried again, but his was also not acceptable. Finally in late April Troye came to 'Millwood.' He had to paint rapidly, because he needed to ride back to Georgetown, Ky. for the birth of his first child who arrived on June 13. The picture was promptly shipped to Porter in New York who in the July 4, 1840 issue of the *Spirit* commented, "We have recently received a very fine picture of Monarch executed by Troye—those who have seen Monarch do not think that Troye has done entire justice to his subject; but the fault which they found is one which can be avoided in the engraving—after remaining a few days longer in our office to allow Northern turfmen to study the proportions of this former champion of the Carolina Turf, it will go into the hands of the engraver."

The engraver, Robert Hinshelwood, slightly altered the stance of the horse so that the small star on his forehead is clearly visible. In the Memoir which accompanies the engraving Porter said, "The portrait which we this day present to our country subscribers is assuredly the most beautiful work of art of all engravings that have been published in the *Spirit of the Times*—it represents Monarch as he appeared in the Breeding Stud; the writer of the following Memoir often saw him last Spring, and compared the picture with the original time and again. Our readers may feel assured that the likeness is an accurate one, and they will all confess that Mr. Hinshelwood has succeeded in producing a striking and beautiful picture."

THE ENGRAVERS

The portraits of Black Maria, John Bascombe, Imported Leviathan, Shark

and Boston, published from March 9, 1839 to March 7, 1840 were engraved by Archibald L. Dick (c. 1805-1855). Born in Scotland, he studied engraving in Edinburgh and came to the United States in the early 1830s. From 1839 to 1855 he lived in Brooklyn, N.Y. Dick was a prolific worker. His engravings are exact replicas of the paintings executed with great skill.

The portraits of Argyle and Imported Monarch published May 23, 1840 and January 9, 1841 were engraved by Robert Hinshelwood (1812-after 1855). Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, where he studied drawing and engraving he arrived in the United States about 1835 and thereafter lived in New York City. Hinshelwood was known for his landscape engravings. This is evident in his two portraits. The picture of Argyle shows the 'Millwood' house, training stables, a magnificent tree and a small group of riders with a lovely landscape in the far distance. The portrait of Monarch includes a forest, a lake, a group of riders and an imposing house, presumably that at 'The Woodlands' which was the principal building on Col. Hampton's stud farm and where he kept many of his paintings of horses.

The portrait of Wagner published July 4, 1840 was engraved by Joseph Napoleon Grimbrede, born in 1820 at West Point, where his father Thomas Grimbrede was an instructor in drawing at the United States Military Academy. J.N. Grimbrede studied engraving with his uncle, John Francis Eugene Prud'homme (1800-1892) who was born Oct. 4, 1800 on the Island of St. Thomas, West Indies, and was brought to New York in 1807 by his parents. Prud'homme was apprenticed as an engraver to his brother-in-law, Thomas Grimbrede. At the time the Wagner engraving was executed by his nephew, Prud'homme was an eminent artist and an Associate of the Academy of Design. When J.N. Grimbrede was given the contract to do the engraving, it was understood that he would do so under the guidance of his uncle.



NSL Notes

The annual list of duplicate books available for sale to 'Friends' of the library will be available in the fall of 1987. Please write and request a copy if you wish to bid on titles to add to your collection of sporting books.

Due to the ever increasing costs of printing and mailing the NSL newsletter, regretfully the library cannot continue to send issues to members who no longer contribute to the library through their donations. We urge all 'Friends' to continue their support of this vital and unique library.

At the meeting of the Board of Directors of the NSL held May 22, 1987, three new Directors were elected to the Board, joining officers Alexander Mackay-Smith, Chairman of the Board; George Ohrstrom, Jr., President; George Horkan, Jr., Secretary; Dale Hogoboom, Jr., Treasurer; Patricia Boyce, Assistant Secy-Treas.; and Directors Arthur Arundel, William Brainard, Jr. and John Warner. Directors added to the Board are John H. Daniels of Hamel, Mn. and Camden, S.C.; James Langley Young of The Plains, Va. and Ellen B. Wells of Alexandria, Va.

Mr. Daniels was Master of the Camden Hunt 1945-46; of the Long Lake Hunt 1958-69; and of the Old Stonington Hunt 1971-73. He served as Western District Representative of the Committee for the M.F.H.A.A. from 1973-81. Mr. Daniels wrote the chapter on drag hunting for Mr. Mackay-Smith's *Fox-hunting in North America* and as a noted collector of sporting books has contributed articles to *The Chronicle of the Horse* on sporting magazines of the past and the sporting artist, Henry Thomas Alken.

Mr. Young is Master of the Orange County Hunt; Virginia Director for M.F.H.A.A.; and Chairman of the Committee of the Museum of Hounds and Hunting at the Morven Park Mansion, Westmoreland Davis Foundation in Leesburg, Va. Mr. Young's aunt, the late Eleanor Langley Fletcher, was a long time supporter and guiding force in the development of the NSL and served as a Director from 1964 to 1982.

Miss Wells is currently Chief of Special Collections Branch, Diebner Library of the Smithsonian Institution. Previously she had been at Cornell University Library in the History of Science Collections, McGill University, and Cataloguer of 17th century imprints at the National Library of Medicine. She has lectured extensively and had numerous works published including: *Horsemanship: Its Literature and Bibliography* and *Horsemanship: A Bibliography Of Printed Materials From The 16th Century Through 1974*.

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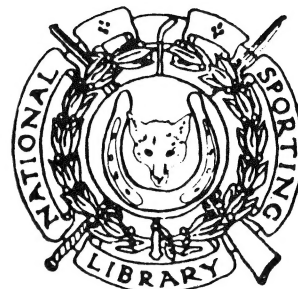
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